
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Used Oil Filters

Background

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services encourages the recycling of properly drained oil filters. Since used oil is a listed hazardous waste in New Hampshire, the Hazardous Waste Rules provide an exemption at Env-Wm 401.03(b) for oil filters not to be considered a hazardous waste, if the used oil filters meet the following criteria.

1. The filters are non-terne plated. (Terne is an alloy of tin and lead and these filters are more typically found on heavy duty vehicles.)
2. The filters have not been mixed with any hazardous wastes identified in Env-Wm 402.
3. The filters have been drained using one of the following methods:
 - a. Puncturing the filter anti-drain back valve or the filter dome end and hot draining.
 - b. Hot draining and crushing.
 - c. Dismantling and hot-draining.
 - d. Any other equivalent hot draining method that will remove used oil.

Discussion

The above exemption criteria are mirrored after EPA's exclusion set forth in 40 CFR 261.4(b)(15). EPA defines "hot draining" as draining the oil filter near engine-operating temperature and above room temperature. In order to ensure that the oil has been removed to the greatest extent possible, it is recommended that the filter be drained for a minimum of 12 hours. Once drained, the oil should be collected for recycling under the requirements of Env-Wm 807. Although the drained filters may be disposed as a solid waste, DES strongly encourages the recycling of oil filters. As there are different recycling techniques, it is recommended that you contact your recycler to determine which draining technique is preferred. For example, some recyclers do not want to receive crushed filters if they are going to separate the metal from the filtration media.

Since July 1989, communities have had the authority to assess an additional fee on motor vehicle registrations for the purpose of collecting and disposing of motor vehicle waste such as used motor oil, filters, tires and batteries (see DES fact sheet WMD-SW-23). Additionally, municipalities and motor vehicle inspection stations are eligible to receive grant monies to establish used oil collection centers to collect do-it-yourself used oil and filters. Many New Hampshire cities and towns have taken advantage of grants to purchase such items as storage tanks, filter crushers, drums, spill kits, and sheds.

Summary

Used oil filters often contain a significant amount of used oil. In order to be exempt from regulation under the New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules, used oil filters need to be hot drained for a minimum of 12 hours. Once drained, the filters should be collected for recycling. For information on the management of used oil, filters, or funding opportunities for public collection centers, contact DES Used Oil Program, PO Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095; (603) 271-6424 or toll-free 1-888-TAKEOIL; TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964.